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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
8 November 1954

TO : Deputy Director (Intelligence)

CD/ED

SUBJECT: Impending Local Government Elections in Hungary

1. Date: 28 November 1954
2. Offices to be Filled: Local councils (local government bodies) on county, town, and village levels.
3. Party Participation: The only legal political party in Hungary is the Hungarian Workers' (Communist) Party. Candidates will be both communist and non-party and run under the banner of the regime controlled supermass organization known as the Patriotic Peoples' Front (PPF).
4. Significant Features:
 - a. The list system of candidates has been discarded in favor of a single native candidate per voting district. The regime has made much of this "democratic" advance over the last election because it allegedly makes the candidate directly responsible to his district and thus permits his recall should he prove unsatisfactory. This refinement is rather hollow since the voter still has no choice of candidates and the amount of independent action likely from his representative is extremely small.
 - b. A key role in the election machinery is allotted to the recently launched Patriotic Peoples' Front, which appoints the personnel for the local election machinery and approves single candidates after they have been chosen by their respective voting district committees. The PPF has probably been given the job to bolster the illusion that it has a real and important role in Hungarian affairs.
 - c. During the pre-election period, the regime has been harassed by Radio Free Europe's balloon drop, known as "Operation Focus." The balloons were launched from West

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Germany in early October and contained leaflets putting forth the "suppressed demands" of the Hungarian People. "Focus" quickly brought forth an angry note from the Hungarian government which complained that United States support or tolerance of such an action was incompatible with easing international tension.

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